

NBC NEWS - IRANIAN HOSTAGE CRISIS REPORTS (1-18-1981)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls>)

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From Sunday, January 18th, 1981 NBC NEWS Reports on the pending release of the 52 American Hostages in Iran which by this date had been held for 442 days.

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indian news agency this morning announced that in fact agreement had been reached here in washington officials at the state department say they cannot confirm that yet vice president mondale appearing on television here in washington earlier today said that we may be very very close the differences are not substantial he said and there is good reason to hope in fact president carter flew back from camp david earlier today he is now at the white house he came back earlier than anticipated and is expected to make a statement sometime later today but first word that in fact agreement has been reached is now expected to come from algiers sometime we hope later today i'm john dancy nbc news in washington now back to dick enberg in columbus ohio john dancy here it is at last the good news that we've been waiting for now for four hundred and forty two days beza nabavi the chief hostage negotiator for iran announced on state radio just a few moments ago that agreement has been reached within the last couple of hours with the united states on the remaining details for the release of the american hostages there has been no confirmation as yet from the american side but we are anticipating that almost momentarily it will probably come from algiers where deputy secretary of state warren christopher and his negotiating team have been meeting practically around the clock working out these past few details navavi said the u.s government accepted the last of our demands and say they are now ready to sign nabavi did not however mention an exact date for release of the american hostages president carter returned from camp david earlier today to be president at the white house and to meet with his counselors we anticipate that the president will be going on television sometime later today but we are not sure of the exact time let's go now to john palmer who is standing by in the white house briefing room john what's happening there confirmation reporters were told to stand by to pay attention to algiers at that point rather than the white house

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point rather than the white house and it could well be that we have just received that word now from algiers uh by that statement from the high iranian official the president has been meeting now for more than two hours shortly after he came here from camp david meeting with the secretary of the treasury the head of the cia secretary of state muskie national security adviser brzezinski it has been what was described as a very long floating meeting meeting sometimes in the president's oval office meeting at other times in the cabinet room and also in the president's private study we are told and we are led to believe that the president will indeed have a statement again waiting for that official confirmation we weren't told exactly what the form of that official confirmation would be only that that word would come from algiers and as you've just reported john we got some very encouraging and it appears very definitive word just now from algiers that the agreement has indeed been reached the president's speechwriter was here early this morning shortly after nine o'clock he met the president just after he came from the helicopter and went into the oval office we again don't know the time when the president will come probably here to the briefing room to make some kind of a statement to the american people but we have been led to believe that after we receive this official

kind of confirmation from algerian officials and from iranian officials then the white house would as uh was explained to me they would then be able to do business with us business with us meaning the two or three hundred reporters that have been gathering here at the white house briefing room all day as uh john as to whether or not the president would go either to wiesbaden west germany to see the hostages or whether he might go to algiers that remains an open question we do know that contingency plans have been made for the president to make that trip one presidential aide said the president personally very much wants to go he has spent so many hundreds and thousands of hours working on this hostage problem it would give him great satisfaction to go to be there however it all depends on the timing of the situation it depends uh as to whether or

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situation it depends uh as to whether or not he could go to either algiers or wiesbaden west germany and then get back in time for to take part of course on tuesday with the inaugural events john we were let me just clear up that we are getting our information by monitoring iran's state radio even as we are on the air and iran state radio to repeat has just announced that bizad nabavi the chief hostage negotiator has announced that final agreement has been reached with the united states within the last couple of hours on release of the american hostages navavi said further we think the ordeal is about to reach its final destination let's check in now with the state department where bernard calve is standing by bernie what's going on over there well there's a great deal going on except that most of the diplomats here are not talking about it for example there is no official confirmation of that report that you just reported that is to say the radio report from tehran saying that a deal has been struck earlier today the word was that there was some wrinkles still to be sorted out that if in fact there was an agreement tuned into the white house was the way the state department spokesman pretty much put it tune into the white house the word will come from there we now understand on the basis of what you're saying that the word will in fact come from algeria the algerians having served as go-betweens between the united states and the iranians but even without official confirmation here that we are aware of it comes as no surprise there has been all through the day here a sense of intense suspense as well as gathering optimism that the breakthrough will in fact take place this has been developing over the past 48 hours it calls to mind the extraordinary frustrations over the past year and a half that the u.s government has gone through as it has sometimes felt it has been close to an agreement only to find its hopes dashed this time there was that concern too and in fact it should be pointed out that there is lingering here among some diplomats a sense of anxiety that a minority of hardliners may move in one way or another to frustrate this deal

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way or another to frustrate this deal one of the reasons that the uh iranian prime minister sought parliamentary approval for that emergency resolution last week which would commit iran to arbitration of disputed claims was to build a political consensus behind any deal with the united states so that if in fact the deal was struck people would not be open to accusations that they had sold out to the great satan that's iran's affectionate name for the united states the political consensus has in fact been built to the degree that we are now aware of it we do not yet have the confirmation what we're being told here that of course supports the scenario we're now hearing is that some u s doctors did in fact leave the united states bound for the u.s air force base at wiesbaden in west germany either last night or early this morning that there is in fact a u.s team composed of staff people here at the state department uh doctors psychologists psychiatrists standing by on alert to go for all i know they may have already left we were not told that in other words the mechanism for implementation has been set up the state department clearly is ready to go what we are missing in an official sense and in fact it may be completely superfluous because it may very well be that the administration is waiting for perhaps warren christopher in algiers to make the first announcement and then the president himself later today but uh the mechanism is ready to go uh i spoke a few moments ago to louisiana kennedy who's been the spokesman of the hostage-wise she too sounded very optimistic there had been calls going out from louisiana kennedy's uh room up here at an organization called flag composed of hostage wives that there would be a news conference that might be televised live from algeria and the

alert went out to the families who might not be watching television today to tune in so that they too could get first-hand the information about what might be transpiring she did not say anything at all about the president making a statement there are those reports as john and you have just indicated

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have just indicated and the expectation is that louisiana kennedy herself will be here right downstairs in the state department lobby making some observations of her own but if it happens obviously we all join that crowd that shout hallelujah hey we are all waiting for this to uh finally reach some sort of resolution there's been a great deal of activity in algiers of course where for the last 48 hours negotiations have been going on very intensively jim bitterman has been standing by in algiers during that time here's a report from him at the american embassy in algiers the scene didn't change even if the news did throughout the day warren christopher and his negotiating team which has now grown to include bankers and finance and legal men came and went with little reaction christopher himself spent much of his day at the foreign ministry three times today he met with the algerian foreign minister himself late this afternoon an hour after the news from tehran reached here he returned to the embassy and was inside before newsmen could get him to reply to their questions then an embassy spokesman came out to dispassionately detail all the comings and goings as he left the spokesman was asked about the agreement are negotiations continuing he was asked at first the reply was negotiations continued then he changed the word exchanges use of the word exchanges rather than negotiations seem to be an indication that perhaps there has been an agreement in the hostage crisis but in keeping with the cautious tone that's been played here all along no one was about to admit it jim bitterman nbc news algiers and what if president-elect reagan he perhaps will be the man who has to implement the agreements which have been worked out between iran and the united states with the algerians acting as intermediaries let's go now to blair house where bill lynch is standing by with a report on mr reagan's day bill well the president-elect has been

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bill well the president-elect has been getting frequent updates on the situation in algiers as it's received here in washington his national security adviser richard allen has been getting updates from the carter administration and then reporting in turn to mr reagan he has spent uh part of the day here at blair house he left for church at mid morning at the national presbyterian center and as he left blair house he said the hostages would be in his prayers he also told reporters here that if iran delivers the hostages he would sign anything to complete the deal that seemed to conflict with his earlier statements about not signing a blank check for iran after services at the national presbyterian church mr reagan sought to clarify his earlier comment by saying if there was an agreement pending and they insisted on my signature before they would release the hostages what i really meant he said was i would sign that agreement when they released the hostages he was asked if that means that he stands by his blank check statement of last week and he said yes so the president-elect continues to get updated here we expect that he will be meeting with the secretary of state resident hague and other officials during the day and into the evening he has some further inauguration activities planned attending a series of concerts tonight at the kennedy center but of course this is foremost in his mind if he's able to start his administration come tuesday without the iran hostage crisis hanging over him he would obviously be very pleased we expect that a reagan spokesman will have something to say later on perhaps after a statement from president carter late this afternoon or early this evening bill lynch nbc news at blair house so we are still waiting for some official confirmation of the word that i gave you before from bizad nabavi the chief hostage negotiator for iran who said that agreement has been reached within the last couple of hours with the united states over the remaining differences those differences as we understand them were the exact amount of the frozen assets to be transferred uh to iran uh there was some difference

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uh to iran uh there was some difference of opinion over exactly how much the united states had in its possession both here and in banks abroad and over a problem of court jurisdiction of certain claims well what happens next as we understand it a 30-man team has been assembling to fly to wiesbaden west germany there they would they would examine the hostages look them over see what kind of health condition they're in and also what sort of mental state they are in uh the doctors believe that in fact some of the hostages maybe have been affected very very severely by their long period in captivity let's go back now to john palmer at the white house john john there has been this new development in that they have straightened the chairs here in this briefing room getting ready for certainly an appearance by the president there are now a couple of hundred reporters cameramen and photographers gathered here in the white house briefing room the stage is all set for the president to come in and make his remarks we were told earlier that they couldn't give us any specific time but once this agreement was made official once they had had all of their translations in farsi english and french once they were sure that they had an iron-clad agreement for the return of the american hostages at that point and only at that point the president of the united states would come out and make an address to the american people this could come anywhere from a few minutes from now until perhaps several hours we just don't know again at last report the president was in that one long continuous meeting in the cabinet room in his private study and in the oval office meeting with the head of the cia meeting with secretary of state muskie and we're told on several occasions there was a telephone call a series of telephone calls and some of them lengthy between president carter and warren christopher the deputy secretary of state who has been in algiers for more than a week now working out these final details the financial arrangements and we are

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the financial arrangements and we are told the actual wording of the agreement between iran and the united states with algeria operating as kind of a middleman in the whole affair again we have nothing new to report as to whether or not the president indeed plans to make this trip but we are told that he very much wants to so if there is time i think we could make an educated guess that he will go if there is time to see the hostages either in algiers or in wiesbaden west germany that he would go as long as he can get back for the the event of the inauguration on tuesday john george lewis has joined me in the studio with some late developments george we have more of the dialogue between navavi the hostage negotiator in iran and reporters he was asked you mentioned that all points were covered in the agreement between the united states and iran except a few and he said yes to the algerian government the united states is ready to sign the agreement and transfer the assets to us uh he was then asked do you think the hostages will be released within a few days and he said naturally when the agreement is done and when our assets are transferred to a third party this does not sound like there are too many more hitches remaining between uh the agreement and the release of the hostages you've been in you've been in tehran what's your guess do you expect that they will be out of the country on a plane and on their way back to uh this part of the world john i've been pretty pessimistic through this whole process because i've seen all sorts of last-minute hitches developed with the iranians because of the various factions in that country because of the political infighting that's gone on there i have the distinct feeling now and all of the signals seem to be pointing it this way the people i've talked to who've been in touch with the iranians over there that the country is finally aligned and that they are in agreement uh that this deal should be consummated uh within the next few days let's go now to uh back to bernie calve at the state department bernie a question who won this negotiation did we win it or did the iranians win it

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did we win it or did the iranians win it well i think you've got to say it's going to wind up as something as a trade-off i think we've got to take a look back at where iran started in this whole process when they seized the americans what was it 442 days ago we have watched iran in its challenges to the united states talk only in revolutionary rhetorical terms and as the months piled up we have watched iran once engaged in war last september 22nd with iraq we have watched some of that revolutionary rhetoric tossed into the waste bin and what we have seen has has been some bizarre bargaining and i don't say bizarre b i z b-i-z-a-r-e more like b-

a-z-a-a-r because just about a month ago iran once again what it described as a final offer called upon the united states to commit no less than 24 billion dollars as some form of guarantee for the release of the hostages well the state department over the past year or so has taken some very weak positions on this case and there have been times when the united states projected an image that struck many people as essentially being on its hands and knees begging for the return of the hostages in this particular case when the united states was confronted by this outrageous demand for 24 billion dollars there was a quick rejection of what iran called a final offer since december 19th and you lock that up against the inauguration date of january 20th there has been an acceleration of what the state department concedes has been serious negotiations on the part of the iranians they have diluted the 24 billion to the extent that the question of the shah's wealth for which iran in december asked for a 10 billion dollar guarantee that that request for a guarantee on the shah's wealth has been cast aside and there seems to be some sort of agreement that there is a 9.5 billion dollar figure so far as iranian frozen assets are concerned so there has been a dilution of iranian demands john bernie we are awaiting a news conference which is supposed

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conference which is supposed to take place almost momentarily in algiers but there has been some delay in the beginning of that news conference we don't think that this is a bad sign at all but we're just simply waiting for that to begin to recapitulate the chief hostage negotiator for iran bazaar nabavi has announced on state radio in iran that final agreement has been reached with the united states on ways of releasing the last releasing the american hostages that agreement was reached within the last couple of hours we have not received confirmation yet we do anticipate receiving that confirmation from algiers in the news conference which is to begin momentarily we will come back when that news conference begins i'm john dancy nbc news in washington this has been an nbc news special report and has come to you from washington the chief hostage negotiator for iran appeared on iranian state radio and said that final agreement has been reached within the last couple of hours with the united states on the release of the hostages now he did not mention a possible release date for the hostages and so far there has been no confirmation of this from the united states side however president carter flew back to the white house early from camp david this afternoon he has been standing by there this afternoon now to the white house and judy woodruff john we are continue to standing continue to stand by here in the briefing room at the white house we have just spoken with an aide here in the white house i've spoken with sources in the diplomatic community all of whom tell me they know of no snags as far as they are concerned this agreement is virtually complete we are simply waiting for technical details to be straightened out for translation to be completed and for some perhaps some other technical details to be worked out but that otherwise they expect the agreement has been completed we are simply waiting for an announcement from algiers after which president carter is scheduled to make an announcement here at the white house

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at the white house john and we'll be back with of course any news as it happens either from algiers or from the white house as soon as it happens i'm john dancy nbc news in washington now back to the bob hope desert classic from new york this is nbc nightly news with jessica savage good evening according to iran's chief negotiator basad nava b there has been an agreement reached on the hostage crisis now there has been no confirmation as yet from the united nava b st this statement quote the u.s government has finally accepted all of the terms set by the government of the islamic republic of iran for the release of the american hostages and the minister went on to say that details of the agreement would be announced shortly at a news conference in iran and the hostages would be released in the next few days now that's the word from iran there has been no official word on any of this from the united states president carter returned to the white house from camp david this afternoon closeted himself with his advisors and has yet to make a statement here's white house correspondent john palmer president carter returned at midday from camp david where he had been following the hostage developments to meet in person with his top advisors here at the white house he was met by vice president mondale and other aides including treasury secretary william miller mr carter went directly to the oval office for a lengthy meeting which included secretary of state muskie

and cia director stansfield turner they conferred immediately by telephone with deputy secretary of state warren christopher who has been in algiers working with algerian mediators on the hostage negotiations more than a hundred reporters and photographers crowded into the white house briefing room they were told there would be no statement by the president until after the agreement was formally confirmed by the algerians at one point one of the president's legal advisors lloyd cutler was asked if the delay of a statement by the

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if the delay of a statement by the algerians met the agreement had hit some kind of a snag he replied no a short time ago a senior white house official told reporters here at the white house there are no major problems holding up announcement of the agreement to free the hostages reporters were told that all parties concerned including the united states algeria and iran are now involved in the technical process of translating and comparing legal documents to make sure that all sides understand what they've agreed to there's no word now as to how long this process will take it's believed here that once the translations and comparisons of the various texts of the agreement are completed an official announcement can be expected from algiers following this the president is expected to make an announcement of his own here at the white house contingency plans have been made for the president to fly to wiesbaden west germany to greet the hostages but that still depends upon whether or not all of the arrangements can be worked out in time for the president to go there and to return in time for the inauguration ceremony at noon tuesday in washington john palmer nbc news at the white house algeria the nation that has been mediating this hostage crisis all along would like to be the country to make the first official announcement of the agreement as keith miller reports intense negotiations have been going on there all day it was a day of confusing signals high expectations and secrecy deputy secretary of state warren christopher reportedly worked round the clock in the u.s embassy compound assisted by a staff of legal and financial experts the unconfirmed reports of an agreement to release the 52 american hostages received some visible support here when algerian security police were buffed to the international airport algerian television cameras were already in place in the expectation that the american hostages would arrive here in roots of the u.s medical facilities in west germany but this evening the negotiations appeared to be far from over

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appeared to be far from over there was a flurry of activity at the embassy staff members were carrying messages to the algerian intermediaries indicating that there were still some points that needed clarification before an official agreement could be signed at one point an announcement seemed imminent a joint news conference with the american negotiating team in the algerian intermediary seemed certain but it did not occur instead christopher along with some of his advisers went to the algerian foreign ministry for another meeting throughout the day there was strict secrecy out to the contents of the messages being passed between tehran washington and algiers and for now the embassy here will not comment on the current stage of the negotiations keith miller nbc news algiers we will have more on the hostage negotiations right after this this has been nothing if not a day of frenzy negotiation so hectic that at some points it was impossible for reporters to learn where the principles were and exactly who they were talking to we have two reports on all this beginning with bob kerr at the state department late this afternoon a senior state department aide told nbc news i am not trying to raise red flags but he cautioned there are still pieces to be put into place despite iran's claim that a full and final agreement has been reached this state department aide emphasized that neither algeria nor the u.s has announced an agreement and he continued nothing has been signed he said the process is moving along and that there are no new problems only technical details remaining to be completed the general feeling among officials here remains that agreement is very close a team of u.s medical experts has left for west germany to be in place where the hostages would be examined other state department officials are on their way and still more are standing by ready to leave at a moment's notice officials here believe that the main reason a deal apparently is being struck now is iran's belief that after tuesday it

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is iran's belief that after tuesday it would have to start all over again with ronald reagan on abc's issues and answers vice president mondale defended the way the administration has handled the crisis we've tried to deal with strength and with responsibility to bring these hostages home safely and to deal with the nation's security interests there's all kinds of good ideas that would risk their lives we didn't want to do that and it's for others to decide whether we performed i'll tell you this the president has been personally concerned committed and working on this problem from the very moment that we got the call and i think history will serve us well when they review the record people here close to the negotiations say what they are trying to do now is avoid jubilation they insist there won't be jubilation here until the plane carrying the hostages takes off from iran bob kerr nbc news at the state department in new york inside this building on the 33rd floor bankers gathered today and waited for word from washington that they should begin the transfer of billions of dollars in iranian deposits the bankers were inside the offices of sherman and sterling citibank's law firm they gathered this morning anticipating a resolution of the hostage negotiations what the bankers were waiting for was a signal from the treasury department to shift their iranian deposits to the federal reserve bank of new york not physically no transfer of currency just a telephone call executing a plan that has been fashioned over the last 10 days from the new york fed the money would then be transferred electronically to the bank of england in london 66 tons of gold belonging to the iranians is already there bankers say this will be the biggest transfer of money in history eight to ten billion dollars with enormous logistical complications by way of perspective they point out that there are only about 90 billion

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that there are only about 90 billion dollars in u.s currency in the entire world late today it was still uncertain how iran wanted its money whether it wanted its gold shipped from london to iran or simply held in an account labeled iran how much if any it wanted in dollars as opposed to other currencies bankers warned that there could be sizable currency fluctuations later this week in worldwide money markets once the details of the huge transfer become known mike jensen nbc news new york among those involved in this the hostage drama few if any had any more interest than president-elect ronald reagan the man who will be our president on tuesday was optimistic he will not inherit the hostage crisis bill lynch reports from washington as he left blair house for church services this morning the president-elect said the hostages would be in his prayers he also told reporters that if iran delivers the hostages he would sign anything to complete the deal that seemed to conflict with his earlier pledge not to sign a blank check after services at the national presbyterian church mr reagan sought to clarify his earlier comment well i meant that if there was an if there was an agreement pending and they insisted on my signature before they would release the hostages what i really meant was i would sign that agreement when they released the hostages but you're not changing your position about a blank check no no during the day mr reagan was briefed on the u s iranian agreement after the carter administration gives its formal response to the agreement president-elect reagan is expected to issue a statement lending his support as well resolution of the long hostage crisis lifts a heavy burden from the incoming president and gives new meaning to his inaugural slogan a new beginning bill lynch nbc news blair house for the families of the hostages all 442 days have been trying but this one especially so we'll have that story when we return

[00:30:05 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnIs&t=1805s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnIs&t=1805s)

[Music] this 14-month wait has been excruciating for the families of the hostages their hopes have been repeatedly raised and then dashed and then raised again well those hopes have never been brighter than throughout this day in globe arizona the family of james lopez waits lopez is a marine sergeant correspondent don oliver spent the day with the lopez family in globe mass was being said in the globe arizona catholic church the lopez family was taking communion when word reached town that iran was saying an agreement had been reached the priest interrupted with a bulletin day at 9 35 this morning therefore the church was over without any confirmation from the u.s government that a deal had been made mr and mrs lopez had just started a news conference in the church basement when she was told that

washington was on the line it was someone from the flag organization of hostage families i well i'm trying i'm fine i did real good until a while ago okay okay bye-bye mark um the state department has said things look positive um but no official agreement has been made i'm sure i'm working hard at believing it i but when i see jimmy getting off the plane the lopez's say they have been up and down so many times in the past 14 months that they now don't know whether to laugh or cry they say they are just trying to be calm until they see their son jimmy step off the plane in germany the state department told them that could be a couple of days donald for nbc news globe arizona

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donald for nbc news globe arizona in wilkes-barre pennsylvania the family of bruce german also waits german is an administrative officer originally from rockville maryland rebecca sobel was with the german family and she has this report from wilkesboro teresa ledesky says tending bar has kept her sane kept her mind and hands busy during these long months it's a neighborhood bar and her friends and customers keep her company but even the company can't completely wipe out the worry reminders of the hostages are everywhere and while for more than a year the waiting has been hard enough she says these last few hours have been minute-by-minute torture oh my stomach i mean it's like butterflies in it i can't eat and i have like an upset stomach it's harder now it's harder now than it has been harder too because of the change in her son this picture was taken just a month before he went to tehran different from the pictures of him this past christmas this morning after she heard the report of a final agreement teresa called the state department for some word basically the situation as it stands right now is that you know we're still waiting to see if there's an agreement we don't have any information yet i see and uh of course as soon as there's any word you know we'll be in touch with everybody yes but uh so far there is nothing so far nothing but teresa has a plan for when she does get word when they're released when my bruce is released i'm going to ring this cowbell and no matter what time of day or night it is i'm going to ring it up rebecca sobel nbc news wilkes-barre pennsylvania richard moorefield another of the 52 hostages moorefield the u.s consul general in iran when the embassy was seized his family kept their tents vigil today at their home in san diego and meredith lewis was there i'm not going to germany

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was there i'm not going to germany dorothea moorfield was up early this morning talking to reporters on the telephone about the latest news from iran and i will see first how long they're going to keep them there and second what my husband wants of all the hostage families she's been the most consistently optimistic about the possibility of a breakthrough coming by this weekend she says she has no doubts in her mind now about seeing her husband very soon cheers warren christopher smile they're coming home richard moorfield's mother and sister arrived as soon as they heard the news they said they are more enthusiastic now than they've ever been before mrs moorfield is satisfied that the agreement is an honorable one and that all the american hostages including her husband can return home with their heads held high meredith lewis nbc news san diego for the release of the 52 american hostages the announcement expected at any time from algeria both sides are said to be in accord on every point but are still working on translation of the terms into three languages the waiting continues at the white house and state department this evening we get two reports white house officials continue to sound all but certain that an agreement will be announced in algiers sometime tonight they say the delay is simply due to the painstaking process of checking every detail president carter is planning to follow the algerian announcement with a statement of his own here at the white house i'm judy woodruff now here's bob kerr at the state department for the past few hours translation of the documents has been underway language changes have been approved and initialed no new problems have come up to delay official announcement of the agreement a senior aide here says the process is moving right along but that there will be no jubilation here until the plane carrying the hostages takes off from iran president-elect ronald reagan said tonight president carter called him to discuss the latest developments i'm emory king in washington nbc news will present a special report following

[00:36:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=2160s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=2160s)

will present a special report following the local news tonight scene at this time will be brought to you in its entirety one half hour from now so that we may bring you the following from nbc news white house just before midnight january 18th the 442nd day of captivity for american hostages in iran tonight comes word that has been eagerly awaited for more than a year that the ordeal for 52 americans is about over [Music] [Applause] this is an nbc news special report the final hours here from washington is nbc news correspondent roger mudd good evening there still is no ironclad agreed upon signed sealed and delivered deal to free the american hostages the chief iranian negotiator says there is one but as yet president carter has not been assured by his chief negotiator warren christopher that there is the delay is because the agreements must be translated into english french and farsi and each must be examined almost word by word to make sure there are absolutely no differences in phrasing or meaning that would enable either side or cause either side to misinterpret president carter apparently has his speech all written and ready to give all he is waiting for is the okay from warren christopher judy woodruff at the white house has late details a senior administration official revealed a little more than half an hour ago that the delay in announcing what u.s officials consider to be a final agreement lies in tehran iranian officials are said to have all the documents necessary to make the announcement to make that agreement public but they are continuing to review them before they give their final approval the senior official here did say there is no indication of any serious problem the explanation he offered as white house officials have all day long is that the documents involved are long and complicated

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and complicated all the more so because they're written in three languages we are told that the united states has done all it can do to complete the agreement again that the hold up is with the iranians but officials here insist they have no reason to believe that there won't be an announcement sometime soon the plan as far as we know continues to be for the first word of the agreement to come from algeria and that it would be followed shortly thereafter by a brief statement by president carter here at the white house mr carter is said to want very much to go to west germany to greet the hostages after they are released but the clock is ticking obviously for him to be able to do that in time to return to washington to attend ronald reagan's inauguration that is an event that mr carter's advisors say he will not miss the mood here roger just as it has been all day long is one of anticipation the president we are told is waiting still at this hour in the oval office for the news that he obviously wants very badly to hear judy what would be the time lag between the announcement by the president that everything is in order and the time we will first begin to see the hostages get on the bus or get on the plane well press secretary jody powell and other officials here have told us that it would be several hours at least before the agreement is announced and before there could actually be a moving of the hostages out of tehran however in the last few hours officials have also been telling us that they believe the second part of this agreement uh what would happen to implement the agreement after the agreement is announced that some of those steps and they won't tell us what those steps are could be and probably are underway now so that that time period appears to be shrinking it uh it is now approximately 4 30 a.m in algiers and it is there that the deputy secretary of state warren christopher who has been the chief negotiator for

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who has been the chief negotiator for the united states and his mission have been working in algiers through the algerian government our correspondent during these past frantic days in algiers watching the endless arrivals and departures is jim bitterman here's his report it is early in the morning algiers time and what everyone here is still up waiting for is a call from the algerian foreign ministry both there at the american embassy translators and legal experts are working through the night to come up with english french and farsi language versions of the hostage agreement it is said to be finished except for the translations and while copies of the document may have been initialed earlier this evening by chief us negotiator warren christopher no one will stamp the deal complete until the final translations are done christopher himself had a late dinner at the embassy and is presumed to have gone to bed any announcement american officials here say will come from the algerians who as intermediaries in the negotiations are properly the ones to announce that

both toronto and washington are satisfied with the deal that announcement according to algerian foreign ministry officials could be made any time throughout the night tonight and in a conference room and the biggest hotel in algiers newsmen are literally sleeping next to their cameras at this hour waiting for foreign ministry officials to arrive and say that the hostage crisis is over tim biderman nbc news algiers hard information is very hard to come by not only in algiers but in washington everybody is on hold there is no lid at the white house that is they are not telling reporters that it's time to go home and get sleep the same is true at the state department they are waiting there for an announcement and bernie cow reports well roger it has been an exceedingly long exhausting day here at the state department and the first break came sometime shortly before noon when iran's top hostage negotiator bazaar navavi said iran and the united states have finally reached agreement on resolving the issue of the hostages

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on resolving the issue of the hostages today he gave a variety of what amounted to almost endless interviews in tehran many of them carried by tehran radio and the justification as nabavi put it was that iran had triumphed over the united states the great satan as iran calls the united states and so it was time to make a deal in the course of these interviews roger labavi was asked do you expect the hostages to be released in the next few days well his answer was yes naturally on the basis of the agreement being reached after the statement that it has been signed and the algerian government has announced it and the deposits which are scheduled to be deposited in an account of a third country central bank have in fact been deposited the hostages will be released immediately there is no fixed timetable as to when the hostages will be released immediately but if you wanted to abbreviate what would amount to an expected anticipated scenario it would go something like this you would have the signing and obviously the statement here by the president iran radio undoubtedly will continue to hammer away and portray this to iran public opinion as a tremendous triumph on the part of the ayatollah you would then have the transfer of billions of dollars of frozen iranian assets to an escrow account it's expected to be the bank of england in london the hostages would then be turned over to a third party presumably the algerians in tehran when the hostages have cleared iranian airspace those billions of dollars in an escrow account would then be turned over to the name of iran the money in fact would not have to leave the bank of england say simply a change in the title as to who owns all those billions of dollars the question that has been central throughout these last few days is why has iran after months of hardlining it against the united states why has iran suddenly tilted in the direction of an agreement some sort of compromise

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of an agreement some sort of compromise with the united states and i suppose if you ran through the whole anthology of reasons you'd have to come up with one single word desperation the iranians at the outset of this crisis with the united states engaged in enormous revolutionary rhetoric that has all been put aside the iranians now are talking in exceedingly pragmatic terms the revolutionary slogans have been tossed into the wastebasket there are a political economic diplomatic military reasons for why iran has made this shift iran hopes that it can swim out of its own assortment of crises roger bernie does this constitute a great victory for iran or not well iran sees it certainly as a tremendous victory iran has consistently referred to the united states as the great satan they have shaken off what they regard as the tentacles of the despised shah and the united states they have always maintained has been the country that has manipulated iran they have sought and feel they have succeeded in humiliating the united states in the eyes of the world and even though in this final package there is a massive compromise on the part of iran they certainly are justifying it for domestic public opinion as a triumph of the iran over the great satan in a moment we will check in with some of the hostage families our coverage will continue after this few americans have been on a more emotional roller coaster these past 14 months than the hostage families at first they counted by the hours then the days and the weeks and then last november fourth by the years and tonight most of them are joyfully back to counting by the hours during this evening nbc news reached a number of relatives and heidi shulman reports on one such family from pasadena california reverend earl lee father of hostage gary lee led his pasadena congregation in worship tonight he called his mood subdued joy although

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he called his mood subdued joy although the official word of a final settlement he patiently awaited all day hadn't come the leaves have not heard directly from their son since last april but despite their agonizing 14 months this morning reverend lee told the members of his church this is no time for bitterness we pray that as they board a plane that they shall leave in iran all hatred or resentments that just as they leave all stuff may their hearts be swept away and swept clean he quoted a passage from isaiah gary referred to in one of his letters do not be afraid for i am with you i will bring your children from the east and gather you in the west after services tonight reverend lee met his wife as she returned from a weekend religious retreat to return home and continue waiting together heidi shulman nbc news pasadena a team of american psychologists is in frankfurt west germany tonight awaiting the return of the 52 american hostages one of the doctors is charles figly director of family research at purdue university and this evening he talked with john hart dr figly what will happen to these survivors when they arrive and shortly after they arrive at this runway well there have been considerable amount of speculation but from the best guess is they'll arrive at the airport be taken to the hospital go through a series of activities one is a complete medical examination then a complete psychological and psychiatric analysis then a program in effect to bring them up to date on what has happened since they've been away to alert them of the program that is ahead of the briefing program and as far as i know the details of that particular program have not been made

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particular program have not been made public as far as we know also they will be given a care package packages from home which brings home to them various kinds of mementos pictures letters that sort of thing and after that is speculation we're not really sure how long they'll stay here really depends on what shape they're in when they come back but the fact is that they're all going to be going together if it takes seven days eight days ten days uh that's what will happen what stages will they go through from here to getting back home and feeling back home well again a lot of speculation but mentally emotionally well i think the first part is getting over the emergency there's going to be in a state of shock for some time trying to get shift from uh an incarceration experience to actually believing that they're out of that and it's going to take some time especially for their mind to be convinced even though the body tells them that they're going to go through a phase of the reunion and homecoming the process of sharing information with their families on what their experiences are and then receiving information from their families about what went on for their families as well this is a very important component too because the families have gone through a great deal and they also will be going through these various phases of recovery because uh the emergency still will not be over for the families until they what questions will they have well the first question is why did it take so long of course anyone who has been held against their will will ask that question and i think that they'll get a lot of explanations for that appropriate explanations the other question is has my family been all right it's been a hell of an ordeal for all of them they've not received a sufficient amount of information and many of them are most concerned about their families so i think those are the the major questions

[00:50:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3000s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3000s)

think those are the the major questions the others is what can i expect after this how does the general public feel about us are they ashamed of us do they appreciate what we've gone through the next questions really will be related to what they find after they've gotten out why all the attention why are why are so many reporters walking around us why are we we being treated as heroes why are we been given so much attention they won't feel like heroes they will not feel like heroes until they're convinced that this country needs heroes they i think will feel that they don't deserve that but um primarily because all of us have thought about them a lot seen their pictures have watched the tapes uh they're clearly going to be that but there are many we've interviewed thousands of vietnam veterans many of whom have received of awards for heroism most of them really feel they've never deserved it either and feel they don't deserve the status of hero the same for these hostages thank you very much dr fegley this is john hart nbc news at rhinemine air force base in west germany it's expected that the hostages will spend anywhere from three days to two

weeks at the u.s military hospital in wiesbaden and as fred francis reports that hospital has been ready for weeks to receive the hostages here at the wiesbaden hospital they are ready for the first time in 14 months there is real optimism here for the first time since the last hostage left richard queen there is real preparation here earlier in the day nbc news learned that they cleared 30 rooms from the amelia earhart hotel a military facility adjacent to this hospital those rooms are going to be for the medical specialist the state department team coming from the united states from washington psychiatrists psychologists some case workers and some medical specialists they will be treating and examining the hostages in the decompression period

[00:52:02 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3122s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3122s)

hostages in the decompression period seven days that they are scheduled to be here in semi isolation fred francis nbc news outside the wiesbaden hospital once the deal is announced there will be a massive transfer of funds from the united states to england through computers and telegrams and telephones it's an enormous financial deal and we'll have details of that in just a moment few americans have been on a more emotional roller coaster these past 14 months than the hostage families at first they counted by the hours then the days and the weeks and then last november fourth by the years and tonight most of them are joyfully back to counting by the hours during this evening nbc news reached a number of relatives and heidi shulman reports on one such family from pasadena california reverend earl lee father of hostage gary lee led his pasadena congregation in worship tonight he called his mood subdued joy although the official word of a final settlement he patiently awaited all day hadn't come police have not heard directly from their son since last april but despite their agonizing 14 months this morning reverend lee told the members of his church this is no time for bitterness we pray that as they board a plane that they shall leave in iran all hatred or resentments that just as they leave all stuff may their hearts be swept away and swept clean he quoted a passage from isaiah gary referred to in one of his letters do not be afraid for i am with you i will bring your children from the east and gather you in the west after services tonight reverend lee met his wife as she returned from a weekend religious retreat to return home and continue

[00:54:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3240s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3240s)

retreat to return home and continue waiting together heidi shulman nbc news pasadena a team of american psychologists is in frankfurt west germany tonight awaiting the return of the 52 american hostages one of the doctors is charles figley director of family research at purdue university and this evening he talked with john hart dr fegley what will happen to these survivors when they arrive and shortly after they arrive at this runway well there have been considerable amount of speculation but from the best guess is they'll arrive at the airport be taken to the hospital i'll go through a series of activities one is a complete medical examination then a complete psychological and psychiatric analysis then a program in effect to bring them up to date on what has happened uh since they've been away to alert them of the program that uh is ahead of them in the briefing program and as far as i know the details of that particular program have not been made public as far as we know also they will be given a care package packages from home which brings home to them various kinds of mementos pictures letters that sort of thing and after that is speculation we're not really sure how long they'll stay here really depends on uh what shape they're in when they come back but the fact is that they're all going to be going together if it takes uh seven days eight days ten days uh that's what will happen what stages will they go through from here to getting back home and feeling back home well again a lot of speculation but uh mentally emotionally well i think the first part is getting over the emergency um they're going to be in a state of shock for some time trying to get shift from an incarceration experience to actually believing that they're out of that and

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have gone through a great deal and they also will be going through these various phases of recovery because uh the emergency still will not be over for the families until they reunite what questions will they have well the first question is why did it take so long of course uh anyone who has been held against their will will ask that question and i think that they'll get a lot of explanations for that appropriate explanations the other question is has my family been all right it's been a hell of an ordeal for all of them they've not received a sufficient amount of information and many of them are most concerned about their families so i think those are the the major questions the others is what can i expect after this how does the general public feel about us are they ashamed of us do they appreciate what we've gone through the next questions really will be related to what they find after they've gotten out why all the attention why are why are so many reporters walking around us why are we being treated as heroes why are we been given so much attention they won't feel like heroes they will not feel like heroes until they're convinced that this country needs heroes they i think will feel that they don't deserve that but primarily because all of us have thought about them a lot seen their pictures have watched the tapes uh they're clearly going to be that but there are many we've interviewed thousands of vietnam veterans many of whom have received of awards for heroism most of them really feel

[00:58:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnIs&t=3480s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnIs&t=3480s)

for heroism most of them really feel they've never deserved it either and feel they don't deserve the status of hero the same for these hostages thank you very much dr figly this is john hart nbc news at rhinemine air force base in west germany it's expected that the hostages will spend anywhere from three days to two weeks at the u.s military hospital in wiesbaden and as fred francis reports that hospital has been ready for weeks to receive the hostages here at the wiesbaden hospital they are ready for the first time in 14 months there is real optimism here for the first time since the last hostage left richard queen there is real preparation here earlier in the day nbc news learned that they cleared 30 rooms from the amelia earhart hotel a military facility adjacent to this hospital those rooms are going to be for the medical specialist the state department team coming from the united states from washington psychiatrists psychologists some case workers and some medical specialists they will be treating and examining the hostages in the decompression period seven days that they are scheduled to be here in semi isolation fred francis nbc news outside the wiesbaden hospital once the deal is announced there will be a massive transfer of funds from the united states to england through uh computers and telegrams and telephones it's an enormous financial deal and we'll have details of that in just a moment once the hostage deal is announced and it appears to be a straight cash hostage deal an enormous amount of money will be transferred the largest amount in history nbc's business correspondent mike jensen has followed this intricate part of the negotiation he's in new york now and he's going to bring us up to date mike roger the bankers are still standing by here in new york they're at citicorp center on the 33rd floor they've been there since early this

[01:00:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnIs&t=3600s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnIs&t=3600s)

they've been there since early this morning and they're prepared to spend the night if necessary what they're waiting for is word from the white house that the frozen assets have been unfrozen released at that point what the bankers would do is pick up a telephone and call the federal reserve bank here in new york officials are also standing by there they would be the ones to put into position probably by telex the transfer of these assets to england mike american bankers sharp traders in this deal the american bankers are probably going to make out very well roger uh the way the deal has been fashioned as best we can understand it the amount of money that the bankers have loaned to iran which is what they were fearful of losing from the beginning is probably going to be put into a special account for them or deducted from the amount of money that they were are returning you'll remember that it was these loans in the first place which caused the assets to be frozen there was concern that the iranians might pull their deposits out of the american banks and then the american banks would have no recourse for the money that the iranians had borrowed from them well who are the financial losers somebody's got to lose something don't they yeah at the moment there don't appear to be any financial losers uh the great concern had been that the american public might lose in this because if the iranians insisted upon getting all that money back and then defaulted on their loans the government would probably have to indemnify the banks in some fashion now the bankers have worked

very hard to get that kind of indemnification but it appears that they might not need it would lots of lawyers make lots of money bringing lots of suits against iran sure they're already roger have been about 350 lawsuits in this and the lawyers have made a great deal of money there probably will be a lot of litigation when it's over the lawyers will do just fine of course the preoccupation in

[01:02:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3720s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3720s)

of course the preoccupation in washington this weekend has been in addition to the hostage the fate of the hostages is the incoming administration it's on everyone's mind and of course it's on ronald reagan's mind bill lynch has been watching mr reagan come and go today as he goes through the the first phases of his countdown toward his inauguration bill after getting a phone call from president carter on the apparent agreement mr reagan attended a round of inaugural concerts at the kennedy center he stopped briefly at a chamber music recital a performance of ballet and opera and a concert by the national symphony orchestra in each theater the reagans were warmly applauded by the well-heeled audience backstage the president-elect met the performers including ballet star mikhail barishnikov when he returned to blair house reporters as they had all day asked mr reagan about the hostage breakthrough at this time but i am optimistic mr reagan planned no further statements tonight on iran and will not say anything of substance until president carter make some official announcement and roger at this hour the president-elect is uh presumably on his way to bed if he's not there already and in about nine and a half hours he'll get a national security briefing here at blair house where he will be brought up to date on the latest developments in the hostage situation bill you must pick up just vibrations from around the reagan camp through the press office and the briefings you get are they uh in lockstep with the carter administration on what's happened well it's a curious thing in the last three or four weeks it seems as if there's been a two-track effort underway on the one hand at every opportunity the president-elect has made it clear and his aides have that he is supportive of the actions being taken by president carter at the same time there have been opportunities for him that he has taken to take a tough line almost as if he's playing a good guy bad guy role in tandem with president

[01:04:01 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3841s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3841s)

bad guy role in tandem with president carter you'll recall that uh he termed the the uh the students the iranians barbarians a couple of weeks ago in california some of his aides have been privately talking about tough actions that they might take all of this perhaps designed to make the iranians very edgy about carrying this crisis over into the reagan administration giving them a new impetus to settle it in the final hours of the carter administration and when the white house put that deadline of january 16th and then january 20th on its offer and said that it might not be renewed maybe that was enough to do the trick for them we'll be back in just a moment with further developments in the hostage story and finally this evening we'd like to visit with another of the hostage families teresa and richard gallegos jim cummings is with them in pueblo colorado okay i'm here with uh dick and teresa gallegos their son billy a marine sergeant is one of the 52 hostages in iran about six hours ago the state department called here mr gallegos took the call answered the phone mr gallegos the voice on the other end told you that the president would be on momentarily and you told us a short time ago that you've been nervous as hell ever since how much more of this can you take as much as we have to until it's over with how much do you hear from the state department are they telling you are they calling you regularly and telling you what's going on where what are you finding out where are you finding it out we find our information from the news media the state department does not call you unless something is confirmed and official does that make you angry does that disturb you at all well i i can understand their point they don't want to get you uh all shook up and then nothing comes of it you could shake up enough with the media as it is mrs gallegos i've noticed through the last couple of days that you

[01:06:01 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3961s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=3961s)

through the last couple of days that you have seemed more hopeful than any time that is that since i've known you and that goes back more than a year that uh this crisis is about to end are you still as as hopeful and confident as you were say 12 hours ago or 24 hours ago well i suppose i am i mean you know it has it

has to happen now or else we don't know what is going to happen what more do you think should be done by our government well after this is over i hope that uh this does never happen again i hope they uh [Music] learn from this that uh um to be a little more careful with our people when they're overseas okay well thank you mr mrs gallegos we obviously are going to be up very late into the night here and one sign of hope is that we've got some champagne chilling in the in the refrigerator so we hope to be drinking it before the night is over this is jim cummins nbc news in pueblo colorado to recap the day's developments president carter within 36 hours of leaving office is now on the verge of an agreement for the release of the american hostages the chief u.s negotiator warren christopher has assured the president that the agreement is in close to perfect order and they are waiting only for assurances that the iranians have initialed the documents there are contingency plans for president carter to fly to germany to welcome the hostages but there's nothing definite about that and he will not miss the inauguration at noon on tuesday in any event president-elect reagan says he has been briefed regularly and is in accord with the reported agreement to the best of everyone's knowledge the deal is a straight swap the us gets back its 52 hostages iran gets its eight or nine billion dollars in frozen assets and finally this has been an excruciating day for the entire country but apparently one of america's most painful infuriating

[01:08:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=4080s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRpy1EMPnls&t=4080s)

painful infuriating embarrassing and emotional experiences as a nation is now coming to a close i'm roger mudd nbc news washington this has been an nbc news special report that has come to you from washington

END